

Message Text

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ACTION MMO-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 SS-15 SP-02 PER-01 ABF-01

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R 040750Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0754

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, XF

SUBJ: MODE - AGRICULTURE/FAS PROPOSAL TO ASSIGN AN AGRICULTURAL
ATTACHE IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

REF: STATE 181323

1. WE DEFINITELY IN FAVOR OF REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE
FOR ARP AREA. QATAR MUST IMPORT VIRTUALLY ALL AGRICULTURAL
COMMODITIES, AND ACCORDING TO GOQ FIGURES WHICH ARE PROBABLY
QUITE LOW, 1974 FOOD IMPORT BILL TOTALLED OVER \$50 MILLION.
HOWEVER, US SHARE OF MARKET HAS BEEN LIMITED - NO WHEAT
SALES AND RICE SALES WORTH ONLY \$1.2 MILLION. VIGOROUS
EFFORT BY REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE COULD SIGNIFICANTLY
INCREASE US MARKET PERCENTAGE.

2. QATAR IS ALSO TAKING STEPS TO INCREASE LOCAL PRODUCTION
OF FOOD. WHILE AMOUNT OF LAND UNDER CULTIVATION IN QATAR
LIMITED (FAO OFFICE ESTIMATES 2000 HECTARES), GOQ KEENLY
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INTERESTED IN EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, AND PRESENTLY

CONSIDERING PLANS FOR EXPANSION OF LOCAL DAIRY FACILITIES, IMPORTATION OF LIVE CATTLE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF MEAT INDUSTRY, AND INCREASE IN VEGETABLE AND GRAIN PRODUCTION. IF IMPLEMENTED, THESE PROGRAMS SHOULD PROVIDE EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR US AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT.

3. WE WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS GENERAL LACK OF AGRICULTURAL EXPERTISE IN GOQ. PROJECTS ARE REGULARLY CONCEIVED AND THEN ABANDONED EITHER BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT SUITED TO AREA OR GOVERNMENT UNABLE TO CARRY THEM OUT. WE BELIEVE INDIVIDUAL SELECTED FOR POSITION SHOULD HAVE BACKGROUND OF AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN ARID OR SEMI-ARID REGIONS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THIS WOULD ENABLE HIM TO IDENTIFY PROJECTS WHICH ARE NON-STARTERS AND POSSIBLY TO PROVIDE BADLY NEEDED PROFESSIONAL ADVICE TO GOQ.
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